Australian educational links

Apart from the teaching of Indonesian studies and language in schools, colleges and universities around Australia, numerous Australian academics and education institutions provide assistance to or maintain exchange programs with counterpart institutions in Indonesia. Non-government groups such as Rotary and AFS Australia have substantial student exchange programs with Indonesia.

Other links include cultural and sporting exchanges, including exchanges sponsored by the Australian Government.

Face to face - relaxing tension

In welcoming the initiative by our Indonesia colleagues, ACFOA affirmed its commitment to encourage greater Australian understanding of the development problems the people of Indonesia are grappling with and foster increased Australian commitment to development co-operation with our nearest neighbour.

But ACFOA is convinced that a more substantial and closer relationship between the people of Indonesia and Australia cannot overlook the issues that have created political tension between our two countries, particularly the incorporation of East Timor and the situation in Irian Jaya.

This inaugural visit and meeting provides a unique and most valuable opportunity for NGOs to contribute to a more peaceful, just and creative relationship between two peoples. It is with hope and expectation that ACFOA welcomes the inauguration of the Indonesia-Australia Project for Co-operation.

Participating Indonesian NGOs include:

1. *Lembaga Penelitian Pendidikan Dan Penerangan Ekonomi Dan Sosial (LP3ES)*
   The Institute for Social and Economic Research, Education and Information
2. *Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia (LBH)*
   The Legal Aid Institute
3. *Perhimpunan untuk Penembangan Pesantren dan Masyrakat (P3M)*
   Association of Pesantrens for Community Development
4. *Lembaga Studi Pembangunan (LSP)*
   Institute of Development Studies
5. *Yayasan Indonesia Sejahtera (YIS)*
   Indonesian Welfare Foundation
6. *Yayasan Pengembangan Masyarakat Desa Irian Jaya (YPMD)*
   The Irian Jaya Rural Community Development Foundation
7. *Yasanti*
   Women's Information Centre
8. *Yayasan Sekretarian Bina Desa Sekretariat (Bina Desa)*
   The Secretariat for Village Development
9. *Perkumpulan Keluarga Berencana Indonesia (PKBI)*
   Indonesian Planned Parenthood Association
10. *Bina Swadaya*
    Community Self-Reliance Development Agency

ACFOA is the co-ordinating body for some 75 Australian non-government organisations working in the field of overseas aid and development.

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INDONESIA AUSTRALIA PROGRAM FOR CO-OPERATION

ACFOA

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR OVERSEAS AID

In 1985, a group of Indonesian and mainly Dutch non-government organisations (NGOs) met in the Netherlands to discuss the development program and policies of the Indonesian Government and the meeting of the Inter Governmental Group on Indonesia (IGGI). IGGI, convened by the World Bank and chaired by the Dutch Government brings together the 13 governments that are the major aid donors to Indonesia. Australia is a member of IGGI and ACFOA sent a representative to this meeting of Indonesian and Dutch NGOs.

The following year, at the Inter NGO Conference on IGGI matters (INGI) 14 Indonesian NGOs signed a letter to ACFOA requesting a meeting with Australian NGOs. This meeting was seen as the starting point for an ongoing dialogue aimed at developing closer people-to-people relationships between our neighbouring countries.

After 12 months of discussion between ACFOA and representatives of Indonesian NGOs, the inaugural visit and consultation of the Indonesia-Australia Program for Co-operation will be held in September 1987.

In Sydney and Melbourne, the Indonesian team will meet with a wide variety of overseas aid, consumer, social welfare and environmentalist groups whilst in Canberra discussions with Government officials and an address to the National Press Club are planned.

Aims of the program and visit are two:

1. To provide an opportunity for Indonesian and Australian NGOs to explore ways of developing closer 'people to people' relations between Indonesia and Australia.

2. To discuss common concerns in development and political, social and cultural relationships between Australia and Indonesia.

Theme for the inaugural consultation is 'Building People-to-People Relationships'.

From the visit and the conference, it is hoped the elements of an ongoing Program for Co-operation will emerge.

'Ive been to Bali too'

For many Australians the words of the Redgum song are a fact. Yet, politically, the relations between Indonesia and Australia are characterised by tension, fear and misunderstandings. It is an irony that whilst relations between our two nations are so often tense, the contacts between Australian people and Indonesians in all walks of life are quite substantial and warm.

The breadth of contact and relationship is considerable and includes:

Aid and development assistance
Whilst the Australian Government will provide development assistance worth close to $54 million to Indonesia in 1986-87, 17 Australian non-government organisations have provided over $2.8m to small scale village development projects in the past 18 months. Through these NGO aid programs, community and church groups have developed partnership relations with similar groups in Indonesia.

Human rights and social justice groups
A variety of Australian community based groups concerned about matters of human rights and social justice in Indonesia keep close contact with Indonesian groups and individuals as well as informing the Australian community about concerns in this area.

Tourism
In the 12 months to December 1986, 104,400 Australian tourists visited Indonesia, most visiting Bali. This was some 4,000 more than for the previous 12 months. But the tourist experience does not always lead to increased understanding and a greater appreciation of Indonesian life and culture.